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FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8003
INFO RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY 0283
RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY 0655
RUEHFL/AMCONSUL FLORENCE PRIORITY 2373
RUEHMIL/AMCONSUL MILAN PRIORITY 8634
RUEHNP/AMCONSUL NAPLES PRIORITY 2531

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 001015

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FOR IO/UNP ANNELIESE REINMEYER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/14/2017
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [UNSC](#) [LE](#) [IT](#)
SUBJECT: LEBANON: ITALY CAUTIOUS ON HARIRI SPECIAL TRIBUNAL
CHAPTER VII UNSCR

REF: A. STATE 63229

[1](#)B. ROME 1011

Classified By: Political Military Counselor Jonathan R. Cohen for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Poloffs delivered Ref A demarche May 10 separately to MFA Near East Deputy Office Director Danielle Bosio, UN Office Director Leonardo Bencini, and the Prime Minister's Middle East Advisor Marco Carnelos, encouraging GOI support for a UNSCR to establish the Special Tribunal for Lebanon. Bosio and Bencini expressed support for establishing the Tribunal, but stressed that a Chapter VII UNSCR should be a last resort. Both noted that Italy had several serious reservations about Security Council action. Bencini said that, while Italy had not made a final decision (and likely would not do so until absolutely necessary), if there was a general consensus Italy would join. Prime Minister Prodi raised the issue of the Tribunal with Ambassador May 10, expressing concerns about the fragile political situation in Lebanon and arguing the UNSC should wait until after October elections to act (Ref B).

[1](#)2. (C) Bosio and Bencini both raised the following list of Italian concerns.

--UN Legal Counselor Michel's report did not rule out the possibility of a negotiated solution, and Italy thought the possibility for an internally negotiated solution, though unlikely, should be exhausted before resorting to Security Council action.

--Lebanese PM Siniora had not expressed to Italy a desire to see the UNSC adopt a Chapter VII resolution.

--Italy doubted the Tribunal could function effectively without the consent of all parties concerned.

--Italy's understanding was that Russia was not supportive of a Chapter VII resolution. If Russia vetoed the UNSCR, the GOI believed it would be the end of the Tribunal, and would also have very negative consequences for Security Council work. Bosio and Bencini both stressed the importance of making certain Russia was on board before tabling a resolution.

--Italy was also concerned about the potential destabilizing internal effects in Lebanon, and the security threat this could pose to Italian UNIFIL troops if Hizballah and other

groups were antagonized.
Spogli